

Ruddington and District u3a Annual Report April 2026

This report is for the year April 2025 to March 2026

Membership

In April 2025 membership was 194. By the end of March 2026, it was 220, an increase of 13%

Monthly meetings

Meetings were held in the Methodist Church on the third Monday of each month. In the hall there were interest group displays and sign-up sheets. Free refreshments were available although voluntary donations were encouraged. Up to 33% of the membership attended and talks were well received.

We were treated to wide ranging topics for our monthly meetings.

April 2025	No meeting	October	You must remember this.
May	It is only Rock and Roll	November	The life and work of Elvis Presley
June	Sherwood Observatory	December	A Victorian Christmas
July	The many behind the few	January 2026	Travels with a Tiger - riding the western front
August	Albert Ball	February	Rowing across the Atlantic
September	The search for my birth family	March	The history of the River Trent

Governance

The u3a operates under a constitution which was revised at the 2022 AGM in accordance with the national guidance. It is also a member of the Notts u3a network.

The committee, elected annually, is responsible for the overall management of the u3a and comprises:

Chair - Liz McAdam, Vice-Chair - Eileen Marlowe (resigned January 2026), Treasurer - Susan Woodward, Business Secretary - Roz Bott, Membership Secretary - Di Brown (resigned June), Publicity - Barbara Breakwell, Interest Group Coordinator - Liz Thornton, Joint Speaker Finder - Chris Davison - Joint speaker Finder - Howard Brown (resigned June), Bryan Browne – Minute taker, Mike Wynn, Pauline Nuttall – Co-opted

Other Non-Committee Roles

Ian Robinson - newsletter editor, Julie Fiddler – website manager.

Publicity

We had a publicity stall at Ruddington Village Market in June.

We were well represented at the Village Show in September where we once again had the publicity stand, and a stand organised by the painting group with a display of their work as well as an activity table for young people.

We received a publicity grant from the Notts Community Voluntary Service Growth Fund which was used to prepare publicity leaflets for distribution at events and around the village.

Interest Group Reports

Book Group - convenor Maureen Thompson

The Tuesday book group has been meeting since May 2018. The ten members meet in each other's homes and seven of these members are from the original group. Our choices have been varied and many discussions have been lively but always enjoyable.

Brush up your French and Brush up your German - convenor Angela Sell

Brush up your German is full with four members having fun and making great progress. We meet in my small flat, hence the size of the group.

There is room for one more member in Brush up your French, which would make 8 in all. We meet in a member's somewhat larger home. We'll be marking our third anniversary in July with a special French lunch prepared by ourselves. I am immensely proud of the progress many have made in the language, at the same time as having fun.

CAMEO - convenor Eileen Marlowe

CAMEO means come and meet each other - it is a group of people who want to meet in groups to do preferred activities such as Sunday lunches, visits out with like-minded people either in the day or evening. My role as the convenor is to publicise the event and bring people together.

Cycling - convenor Tracy Meakin

The U3A cycling group meet monthly (different day each month). We have cyclists on both conventional and electric bikes. The rides usually follow quiet road and cycle paths and start at 9.30am from the Green. We have 16 members in total and usually get approx 6 people on each ride. We are a very social group, and all our cycle rides include a coffee and cake stop. We usually cycle between 15 and 25 miles at a steady pace.

French for Beginners – convenor Angela Sell

This is a new group which meets three weeks out of four on a Wednesday afternoon. There are still two vacancies so if you are planning a trip to France and would like to be able to make yourself understood please contact Angela.

Gardening - convenor Mike Davey

Garden Group members enjoyed several interesting visits during the year despite encountering some poor weather.

Knit and Natter - convenor Joy Clayton

We are a group of knitters/crocheters who meet every Friday morning from 10am to 12 noon upstairs in Philo's cafe in Ruddington. Numbers vary from week to week, but everyone is welcome, no need to book, just turn up and enjoy a chat with some creativity. If you have never knitted before there is always someone to offer advice and show you how to get started.

We mainly knit baby/toddler clothes, but you can bring any project you wish to work on, we even have members who knit some lovely toys too. All our knitted pieces are either donated to local Hospitals and Charities or more recently we have been running a stall at the Ruddington Village Market. This is on the 1st Saturday of the month, and we sell our knits to raise money for the Ruddington U3A. Currently we have raised over £200. For more information contact Joy Clayton 0115 984 6129.

Lunch club - convenor Margaret Marshall

The lunch club has continued to meet on the first Thursday in the month. The location varies as much as possible and is well supported.

Monthly Quiz - convenor Barbara Breakwell

The Quiz Group meets on the last Friday of each month for a light-hearted but competitive afternoon.

Any of our 28 members can volunteer to set the quiz and this creates a variety of questions to challenge the various teams. The winning team receive a Wispa chocolate bar each, as members are supposed to whisper their answers so as not to share them to the other teams!

"One in One" group - convenor Peter Wakelin

The group has welcomed several new members over the past year and attendees to the monthly meetings continue to be 50/50 between men and women. During the year visits have been made to local villages and also to Bingham, Loughborough, Beeston and more.

Painting & Drawing - convenor Liz McAdam

This group meets fortnightly in the Elms Park Committee Room.

The group uses mainly watercolour, occasionally other mediums and visiting artists demonstrate some unusual techniques.

Pétanque - convenor Chris Murden

Regular meetings are held in The White Horse carpark on the 1st Thursday and 3rd Friday of the month and are well attended.

Photography Group - convenor Anne Hooley

The group continues its monthly meetings, when we usually present our photos on a specific theme, and we occasionally have an outing or an outside speaker. We look at the work of other photographers and examples of particular techniques in an effort to improve our own photos, all in a friendly, relaxed atmosphere.

Scrabble Group - convenor Di Brown

We have 5 people regularly but have 7 people in the group. People dip in and out as things crop up. We have two venues which are members' homes.

Spanish - convenor Debra Lowe

We are a small, friendly group who meet in Philo's cafe on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of each month. The ability range varies from beginners plus to advanced. We concentrate on speaking Spanish and have covered a number of topics over the years using various formats. We always manage a coffee (sometimes a cake!) and we try to keep it light.

Table tennis - convenor Steve Lowe

The Table Tennis group meets every 1st, 3rd and 5th Wednesday (when there is one) of the month in the Methodist Church Hall at 10:30. We currently have a core of around 16 members and the average turnout for each session is 12. We usually play round robin singles across 2 tables with the occasional doubles game thrown in if numbers are down. A £2 charge per session covers the cost of room hire and refreshments. New players of all abilities are always welcome to come and give it a go. All equipment is provided.

Tai Chi - convenor Judy Hasson

Our Tai Chi for Health classes continue as previously, weekly. Thursday morning at Ruddington village hall.

10 00am. Beginners group. Still accepting.

11 00am. Intermediates group. Closed (Full).

12 00pm. Improvers group. Still accepting.

The charge is £4 per class.

The Tai Chi membership continues to grow. We now have 52 registered participants.

I can be contacted by my email.

Theatre Exploration and Appreciation - convenor Jae Marriott

This group meets every fortnight at the home of our group convenor.

We talk about the performances that have been seen; plan new theatre trips to a range of venues around our region; watch an eclectic mix of plays from the National Theatre's abundant archive: drink tea; eat biscuits and discuss all things theatrical. New members welcome.

The Friday Book Club - convenor Liz Thornton

The Friday Book Group continues to meet on the first Friday of the month at Philo's in Ruddington. During the year we have read a wide range of books, from Agatha Christie to Sally Rooney and many other genres, some chosen by the group members but also some recommended by the library.

We now have 10 members which we consider to be the best number to ensure everybody has a chance to air their views.

The Wednesday Book Group – convenor Anita Frears

We now have another book group which has a few spaces. This group meets on the third Wednesday in the month at Philos in the afternoon and would welcome new members.

Travellers' Tales - convenor Peter Davison

We held 10 meetings in the 2025/26 year. Attendance averaged 15 with a high of 23. Using the large tv screen at the Hub Steve Hewitt, Maggie Browne and Peter Davison, presented illustrated talks on their travels and experiences. At one meeting favourite city breaks were discussed and at another David Gill set a quiz which challenged us all.

Walking 5-8 miles - convenor Paul Clarkson

The walking group have enjoyed a variety of locations throughout the year. and many of the walks have ended at a friendly pub with the group enjoying a nice lunch and drinks with transport often shared. Walks are organized from April – September.

Wine Tasting - convenor Paul Clarkson

The Wine Tasting group work hard each month to increase their knowledge of a wide range of wines. The group meets in houses able to accommodate up to 16 people and sometimes demand exceeds capacity. The group enthusiastically fulfils the u3a aim to "Learn, laugh and live!"

All the interest groups are thriving, reflecting the excellent work of convenors. Participation in them is at the heart of our u3a. There are people for whom their participation in one interest group is the main benefit of membership. There are also members who support several interest groups. One member attends five!

If you have a particular interest which is not already covered by our groups, or the group is full, please consider starting a group yourself. Our Interest Groups Coordinator, Liz Thornton, would be happy to help in setting this up.

Other Activities

A further Older Drivers workshop was held in June 2025.

A boat trip on the River Soar

A trip to the panto at Nottingham Playhouse.